

## MINUTES

Pullman Police Advisory Committee

January 11, 2010

5:30pm at City Hall

The regular meeting of the Pullman Police Advisory Committee was held at 5:30pm on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise Street, Pullman, Washington, with Committee Chair Arlene Parkay presiding.

### ROLL CALL

Present:	Arlene Parkay	Chair & WSU Staff & Faculty Representative
	Barbara Hammond	College Hill Representative
	KNona Liddell	College Hill Alternate
	Marcus Crossler	Military Hill Representative
	Karen Kiessling	Pioneer Hill Representative
	Richard Hume	Pioneer Hill Alternate
	Phyllis Stallcop	Sunnyside Hill Representative
	Al Sorensen	Business Community Alternate
	Riley Myklebust	ASWSU Representative
	Dan Hornfelt	Pullman School District Representative
	Greg Wilson	Pullman High School Parent Representative
	Dallin Larsen	Pullman High School Representative

Absent:	Zach Hays	WSU Staff & Faculty Alternate
	Matt Nobles	Military Hill Alternate
	Mike Lowery	Business Community Representative
	DaVina Hoyt	Multicultural Representative
	Floyd Berry, Jr.	Multicultural Alternate
	Patrick Horton	ASWSU Alternate
	Bill Hawbaker	Pullman High School Parent Alternate
	Alex Wilson	Pullman High School Alternate

Staff:	Chief Weatherly	Pullman Police Department
	Elysia Spencer	Pullman Police Department
	Sgt. Dan Dornes	Pullman Police Department
	Det. Mike Crow	Pullman Police Department

### CALL TO ORDER

Parkay called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. The meeting had a quorum.

### MINUTES

Minutes from December 14, 2009 meeting reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes of the December 14th meeting as corrected. Motion passed.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**  
Presentation on graffiti &  
gang issues in Pullman

Weatherly requested that this item be moved to the beginning of the meeting to accommodate the schedule of one of the presenting officers. This item was placed on the agenda after concern was raised by a citizen about the amount of graffiti and the police department's response to it, as well as concerns about gang affiliation.

Weatherly advised that the department has one officer assigned to monitor graffiti activity in the area. Typically, an on-duty patrol officer will take the initial report of the graffiti. That officer will photograph the graffiti, contact the property owner to request that they remove the graffiti, and complete a report. That officer will then pass the information onto the officer assigned to monitoring graffiti. Traditionally, this task has been assigned to the school resource officer. The original patrol officer will then perform follow-up to insure that the property owner did remove the graffiti.

Due to the concern about specific recent graffiti being gang-related, officers collaborated with a Yakima PD detective who specializes in gang graffiti. The detective's analysis determined that the Pullman graffiti was not legitimate gang graffiti, but was a bad copy of well-known gang graffiti.

Weatherly then introduced Sgt. Dan Dornes and Detective Mike Crow and outlined their responsibilities within the department. Officer Crow wanted to specifically address the issue of gangs. He advised that he would be the first person to say that there are not gangs in Pullman, nor does he see them as being on their way to Pullman. Officer Crow advised that in the past, there have been occasional gangs that have been classified. Currently, Officer Crow sees the main problems of gang-like graffiti stemming from:

1. An individual gang member in town to attend school
2. Someone with gang affiliations in the past
3. A gang member who comes into town for a weekend party who ends up tagging for a day or two.

But overall, Officer Crow does not believe that there are currently gangs in Pullman.

Officer Crow advised that historically, gangs in Pullman have mainly been comprised of gang "wannabes" at the high school, and these gangs have typically dissolved after the members graduate and/or move out of the area. But Officer Crow advised that the important thing to glean from past interactions with gangs was the fact that the police department always finds out about the gangs and are able to stay on top of it. Officer Crow advised that he will make people aware of it when we do have gangs in the future.

A member asked about the reaction that officers receive from property owners when they are contacted about graffiti and their responsibility to clean it. Officer Crow advised that the reaction is usually just one of annoyance. Sgt. Dornes advised that in reviewing the cases, he even noted that a lot of property owners were very positive and worked to get it removed as soon as possible. Sgt. Dornes also advised the Committee of a new tracking code that the department has developed that allows them to differentiate between graffiti and other types of vandalism.

A member asked if there are certain locations in town that are repeatedly targeted. Officer Crow advised that there are. Some of the most commonly targeted sites:

1. The warehouses on Grand Avenue by the walking trail
2. The bridge at Terre View Drive
3. The viaduct by the skate park

A member pointed out that these locations are all public property, and asked whether the City was responsible for the cleanup. Sgt. Dornes advised that yes, the City is responsible for cleaning up graffiti on public property.

A member asked if the graffiti occurs on private property and the property owner has to buy paint/supplies to clean it up, whether there is victim compensation available to the property owner. Sgt. Dornes advised that if a suspect were caught and convicted, that restitution would be available through the courts. Unfortunately, most perpetrators of graffiti are not caught.

Sgt. Dornes advised that they have recently created a graffiti tracking document to assist the department in analyzing the graffiti for patterns or tag "signatures", possible gang affiliation, and possible links between the graffiti and other criminal activity in the area.

A member asked about the stickers on the back of some local stop signs. Sgt. Dornes advised that they were left over from last year when two members affiliated with a political group out of Seattle were in town for a public talk, and then went through town and plastered the stickers on signs, business window, etc. before attempting to break into the downtown Armory. Weatherly advised the members if they observed any of these stickers around town, to notify the police department or Public Works of the location so that they can be removed.

## **REGULAR BUSINESS**

### **Discussion of the winter break burglaries**

Weatherly advised that there was a citizen report of a burglary. Officers responded and determined that it appeared to be a "stack job", where the suspects enter a residence, collect and stack the items they want to take, and then return later to remove the items from the premise. The officers advised the victims to keep an eye out for suspicious vehicles in the area, in addition to officers making extra patrols through the areas. A victim called back later with the description of a suspicious vehicle. Officers responded, located the vehicle, and subsequently made two arrests.

Sgt. Dornes advised that during the execution of the search warrant, officers discovered evidence not only of the originally reported crime, but enormous amounts of stolen goods, including TVs, electronics, gaming consoles, etc. Officers applied for and executed several more search warrants and recovered the property. Officers also located drugs and a firearm in the residence, which one of the suspects was prohibited from owning due to being a convicted felon. Officers then tried to determine additional victims from the hundreds of property items recovered; however, this process was complicated by the fact that WSU was still on winter break, so the majority of the victims had not yet returned to Pullman. At this point, there are six confirmed victim residences, with approximately 25-30 victims. As more people return, we may have additional victims come forward, and the investigation is ongoing.

A member advised of an incident involving a garage door being opened by a vehicle driving down the street, and didn't know if it was an accident or whether someone was actively scanning garage door frequencies as a method to commit burglaries.

## **REGULAR BUSINESS**

### **Taxi cab ordinance equipment provision**

Weatherly advised the Committee that the City Council specifically sought the Committee's input on the issue equipment inspections. However, as was discussed at the last meeting, the Committee may want to take a closer look at several of the sections and provide feedback to the Council on those areas. Weatherly advised that Sgt. Dornes is in charge of the taxi cab licensing process, including the background checks.

Sgt. Dornes reviewed some of the items that he has been working on, although he advised that he is approximately two weeks behind where he wanted to be due to his work on the winter break burglary case. Sgt. Dornes provided a copy of a letter that he mailed to owners of four taxi cab companies that he was able to locate who provide taxi cab service in Pullman. The intent of the letter was to make the owners aware of the ordinance's passage and give some introductory information on what the registration process might look

like, so that everyone is on the same page moving forward. Sgt. Dornes advised he is working on setting up the procedure, administrative, and application forms. Sgt. Dornes advised that the ordinance requires background checks for all owners and vehicle operators, and that specific criminal and traffic activity would prevent them from getting a license if they had occurred within the past three years, while other criminal convictions, including certain sexual assault crimes, would prevent them from being eligible for a license no matter when the crime occurred. Sgt. Dornes is hoping to get a follow-up letter and the license application put together and mailed out in approximately two weeks.

Sgt. Dornes then went onto the question of vehicle certification versus vehicle inspections. Sgt. Dornes shared a list of all of the vehicle requirements of RCW 46.37, which pertains to everyone, not just taxi cabs. Sgt. Dornes also reviewed the results of his survey of local mechanics shops for pricing of potential vehicle inspections, including concerns that the mechanics expressed about the safety of some of the vehicles currently in use. The average price for inspections came out to around \$70 as annual inspection. The ordinance as it is currently written requires that owners certify that their vehicles meet the RCW vehicle safety equipment requirements. Sgt. Dornes shared a draft version of what that certification might look like. Sgt. Dornes reviewed some of the options involved for moving forward, and the penalties for noncompliance.

A member asked whether revocation of a license would be the owner's license, the driver's license, or something connected to the vehicle itself. Sgt. Dornes advised he believed it to mean the owner's license, but noted some discrepancies in the wording of a couple sections could lead to confusion. Members agreed that there are sections of the ordinance that need to be cleaned up.

Parkay advised that her understanding from the City Council meeting was that they would like the Committee to have a subcommittee make recommendations on the vehicle certification issue, as well as on some of the other areas that need clarification. Parkay asked if there were any members who would volunteer to form a subcommittee to look closer at this issue, with assistance from Sgt. Dornes. Members Riley Myklebust, Marcus Crossler, and Al Sorensen volunteered to form a subcommittee to review the taxi cab ordinance. The subcommittee will report back to the Committee at the February meeting, at which time the Committee as a whole will compile its recommendations for submittal to the City Council.

Parkay requested that members not on the subcommittee please send any ideas, questions, or suggestions via email for consideration by the subcommittee.

A member asked a question about whether the ordinance applies to limousines. The ordinance did not appear to be clear on the issue, so members requested the subcommittee do follow-up on this issue as well.

Weatherly reiterated that at this point, although the ordinance has been passed, since the licensing mechanism is not yet in place, officers are not yet taking enforcement action on the ordinance. Weatherly also advised that City Council will need to pass a resolution authorizing the police department to collect the applicable licensing fees.

Members discussed a letter that was sent to the attention of the Committee regarding the taxi ordinance. Members specifically addressed the concern expressed in the letter that the City was somehow using the ordinance to set taxi cab fee and fare prices. Parkay advised that the Committee has never advocated setting any control or caps on prices; the concern has always been about clearly posting the prices, whatever they may be. Sgt. Dornes advised that the code does not set any pricing mandates; it only requires clear posting of the rates.

A member asked if the ordinance applied to taxi cabs coming from out of town, such as driving to Pullman from the Spokane Airport. Weatherly advised that if they operate in Pullman, they would be subject to the ordinance.

Another member asked about limousine services based in Spokane that high school students rent for prom. Weatherly advised that they may need to get clarification from the City Attorney on this issue.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Member I.D. cards

New I.D. cards were available for members who had their picture taken at previous meeting. Members who still needed to have their picture taken would remain after the meeting.

#### **CONSTITUENCIES POLL**

- WSU Staff and Faculty – More information on the WSU Police Advisory Board spring semester public forums. Members expressed concerns about the title of one of the forums possibly conveying the wrong message. Concerns will be passed onto the Board, as the information is still in a draft version.
- College Hill – Nothing
- Military Hill – Question about how the rental registration was

going. Noticed an inconsistency between the code and the application.

- Pioneer Hill – Issue of running a stop sign at an intersection due to foliage that was raised in the newspaper that had previously been mentioned by the Committee. Weatherly provided an update on steps the City is taking to help the situation.
- Sunnyside Hill – Nothing
- Business – Question about downtown parking. Also asked about business registration, and a possible loophole for branch offices.
- Multicultural – No representative
- ASWSU – Nothing
- Pullman School District – Lights removed on one of the fields due to problems with rotting light poles and woodpeckers.
- Pullman High School – Discussion of theft in December from the Aquatic Center where members of the swim team had money stolen from them. Also mentioned that he will be graduating and will be looking for a replacement representative.
- Pullman High School Parent – Continued discussion of the December theft at the Aquatic Center.
- PTA Lincoln Middle School – No representative

**MEMBER AND  
ALTERNATE  
SEARCH RESULTS**

There was no discussion about the search to fill member vacancies on the committee at this meeting.

**NEXT MEETING**

Monday, February 8th, 2010 at 5:30 pm. Possible agenda items include:

- Taxicab subcommittee report
- Discussion of time and location for future joint meeting with the WSU Police Advisory Board

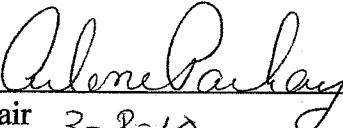
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

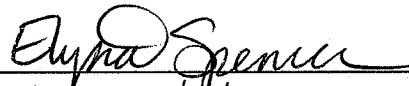
Parkay opened the floor to public comment by members of the audience. Janice Brown expressed concern over graffiti that was painted over, but is still visible. Sgt. Dornes advised that he would follow-up on this matter.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Parkay entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion for adjournment was seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

**ATTEST:**

  
Chair 3-8-10

  
Secretary 3/8/10